

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 L-03 SY-05 SCCT-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 /073 W
----- 084849

R 111238Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 548

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 9413

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS IT

SUBJECT: ITALIAN CONSULAR OFFICER REQUESTED TO LEAVE ASMARA

1. NEWLY ARRIVED ITALIAN AMB GUIDI TOLD CHARGE IN STRICT CONFIDENCE AUG 9 THAT DURING HIS FIRST CALL (PRIMARILY COURTSEY) ON EPMG FONMIN KIFLE WODAJU, KIFLE CONCLUDED CONVERSATION BY REQUESTING THAT ITALIAN CONSULAR OFFICER NAPOLEONE BE REMOVED FROM ASMARA. KIFLE SAID EPMG DID NOT WANT TO DECLARE NAPOLEONE PNG BUT DID WANT HIM OUT AND WAS PREPARED GIVE ITALIANS TWO-THREE MONTHS TO ACCOMPLISH HIS TRANSFER. GENERAL GROUNDS FOR REQUEST WERE IN EFFECT THAT NAPOLEONE HAD OVERSTEPPED BOUNDS OF HIS AUTHORITY IN DEALING WITH EPMG AUTHORITIES IN ASMARA.

2. RATHER THAN WAIT, GUIDI DECIDED ACT QUICKLY AND NAPOLEONE WAS PULLED OUT LAST WEEK. NAPOLEONE WAS ACTING CONSUL GENERAL, BUT DECISION WAS MADE EASIER FOR GUIDI BY ARRIVAL OF NEW CONGEN ALSO LAST WEEK.

3. COMMENT: CON GENERAL SLUTZ IN ADDIS ON CONSUL- TATION BELIEVES SPECIFIC INCIDENT THAT TRIGGERED EPMG
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REQUEST WAS NAPOLEONE'S REFUSAL TO BE BROWBEATEN BY

ASMARA AUTHORITIES WHEN KIDNAPPED ITALIAN VICE CONSUL FROM MASSAWA WAS RELEASED BY INSURGENTS. NAPOLEONE APPARENTLY REFUSED TO TURN VICE CONSUL AND HUSBAN OVER TO EPMG FOR QUESTINGING UNTIL KIDNAPPEES HAD RESTED AND RECOVERED FROM THEIR ORDEAL. PROBLEM PROBABLY GOES DEEPER THAN THAT, HOWEVER. ITALIAN CONSULAR OFFICIALS IN ASMARA OFTEN FIND THEMSELVES IN DIFFICULT POSITION VIS-A-VIS EPMG AUTHORITIES. THEY ARE FREQUENTLY UNDER PRESSURE FROM THEIR OWN COMMUNITY (MANY OF WHOM GUIDI DESCRIBES AS REAL "PIEDS NOIRS") TO ACT VIGOROUSLY ON COMMUNITY MEMBERS' BEHALF EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE TIMES WHEN CONSULAR OFFICERS WOULD PREFER NOT TO DO SO. RESULT IS THAT EPMG AUTHORITIES BECOME IRRITATED. IN CASE OF NAPOLEONE, GUIDI SAID HIS IMPRESSION OF MAN WAS THAT HE TENDED TO IMPERIOUS BY NATURE WHICH PROBABLY DID NOT HELP.

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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04 MAY 2006

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